

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### **Representative Frey Signs Petition For Special Session To Limit Eminent Domain Powers**



#### *Legislation Would Prevent Taking Property To Benefit Private Developers*

Hartford, CT-State Rep. John H. Frey, R-Ridgefield, has signed a petition calling for a special legislative session to limit the state's eminent domain laws that have been used to seize private property and turn it over to private developers. Republican lawmakers held a press conference at the State Capitol on Friday, September 16 to begin their petition drive for the special session, which would enact a moratorium on any eminent domain action for commercial development purposes.

Last week, the New London Development Corporation (NLDC) began evictions in the Fort Trumbull neighborhood to roust residents who challenged the taking of their property all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. On June 23, the court ruled, 5-4, that the city can seize seven middle-class homes to allow a private developer to build a hotel, conference center, offices and upscale housing.

The Republican petition drive was prompted by a lack of action by majority Democrats, who have publicly endorsed a moratorium but refused to actually call a special session that would impose one. Instead, Democrat leaders mailed letters to every town and city in the state notifying them of their position. While the NLDC also publicly embraced the moratorium at that time, the eviction notices, which included demands for \$600 in monthly rent for the houses that the people are living in, were sent last week.

"Since the Supreme Court ruling, 11 states have amended their laws regarding eminent domain to protect homeowners from the kind of action that the City of New London has taken," said Rep. Frey, who serves as an Assistant Minority Leader. "It's difficult to believe that the state where this problem originated is not one of them. The Legislature needs to revise our statutes to prevent any taking of private property for projects that economically benefit private developers. I'm hopeful our petition drive is successful, so that Connecticut homeowners don't have to wait any longer to be guaranteed this type of protection."

On Tuesday, June 28, Rep. Frey voted in favor of a similar proposal that was defeated in a nearly-party line vote. The Legislature held a special session that day to complete work related to the 2005-2007 state budget.